

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor Teresa Zemaitis  
Vice Mayor Barbara Roberts  
Councilwoman Ellen DalBo  
Councilwoman JoAnne DeSimone  
Councilwoman Wanda Dudley

**FROM:** Matthew Campbell, Town Manager

**SUBJECT:** Town Observations ó April 2014

**DATE:** April 23, 2014

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Over the course of the last seven weeks since becoming your new Town Manager, I have prioritized my time to schedule and meet with existing and past council members, interested community members, and staff. I have also taken the time to collaborate with some of the original managers that assisted the Town with transitioning from a Commission form of government with 5 separate and specifically focused administrators (the Mayor and City Commissioners per the old City Charter) to the Council-Manager form of government with one universal administrator. My goals for each of these meetings have been to first and foremost get to know each and every one of you with whom I have met, but to also 1) listen clearly to what you like and don't like about the community, and 2) to learn of the programs or projects that you would like to accomplish within the community in the future. I have also taken the time to thoroughly canvass the community and its surrounding environs, both by car and on foot to identify strengths and weaknesses regarding the Town's geographical location, community virtues, housing and roadway infrastructure, and businesses present that lend support to the community and its residents.

In each of these meetings, I've stressed the importance of being a neutral administrator, and to insure that the City is provided the best services possible. More importantly, I was hired to be present, and to stand up for the process. Hence, I did not arrive with any pre-dispositions for the Town and its people. As indicated in my initial interview, and subsequently at our Council meetings in March, I strongly feel that it is still important to ask for a reasonable period of time to conduct my evaluations of the strengths and weaknesses of the Town, and for your continued patience and confidence that our actions of working together will result in a greater good being accomplished for the Town moving forward.

Presently, this document is intended to provide you with a summary of my initial observations, and to seek guidance on which efforts or projects the Council would prefer to be prioritized for implementation in the short term, or the near future. This memo is intended to serve as an initial foundation, or starting point from which referenced ideas or projects can be spread over the next 2 to 5 years, depending on priority level, funding availability, and staffing, that will ultimately

add a much needed level of professional organization and quality-of-life element that the Town so richly deserves.

## **TOWN MANAGEMENT**

Upon joining the Town as your Town Manager, I've developed an ongoing master list of policies that either need updating, or entirely new policy drafts where none have previously existed. Based on timing and staffing availability, policy development is a regular activity in municipal government that occurs on a recurring basis. Town managers regularly are called upon to develop policies to enable efficient government to occur. Over the course of the next year, since our new Council is in a learning and growth stage, I will be presenting a number of policies from time to time for Council and community consideration, ultimately enabling Community leaders and Town management to grow together.

Specifically, the Town is in desperate need for the development of general and complex organizational policies, directives and procedures that would govern how a Town operates and does business within the community. Upon initial outlook, the Town's personnel policy has not been updated since 1997. Job descriptions for existing and future employees are sparse, and the Town would benefit from a pay and classification plan that would function with the personnel rules and regulations policy. Innumerable additional administrative policies would be drafted that would address work hours, dress codes, uniform & boot allotment for all departments, computer and tablet use policies, day/probationary worker policies, and Town facility or property use policies, etc. Policy development influences a greater understanding of how a government functions, and protects the health, safety and general welfare of the Town, its workforce, and the community. Finally, clear and accurate policies improve the general understanding of government, and they strengthen the insurance liability of the Town.

## **FINANCIAL**

The Town's budget is in need of certain elements that provide a history of where the City has been, and is going in the future. Fortunately, the Town does not need a grandiose "telephone book budget document that is often commonplace in larger communities. Rather, my goal is to work with and analyze the existing budget to provide minor identifying characteristics of 1) historical budget figures for the prior three years, 2) additional pages that reflect fund balances within all Town accounts (Investment and Reserve, Penny and Beautification), 3) possible scenarios to eliminating budget shortfall, and 4) more accurate budget back-up narratives-by-department to enable an improved understanding of anticipated expenditures that will occur throughout the fiscal year. These actions will positively influence communication between the Council and staff, promote improved government transparency, and serve as a reminder of how the community is growing each year. I will also be scheduling meetings in the coming months with each of the Councilwomen on a one-on-one basis where department heads will be soliciting feedback on Council desires or goals for the FY15 budget. These meetings will provide the Council with an improved understanding of the overall budget process, and promote efficiency in future budget workshops.

In addition, since my first week with the Town, I've encouraged all staff to be accountable for their spending, and initiated budget planning meetings months earlier than what typically has occurred in prior years.

In meeting with community leaders, residents and staff, requests have been made to analyze existing staff, law enforcement and council salaries to ensure that the Town is competitive with the services it provides in relation to surrounding communities with similar attributes (population demographics, property values, ad valorem tax revenues, etc.). Current and future year budgets will also include a summary page of financial options to potentially enable the Town to achieve a balanced budget, including analysis of millage rates, contract adjustments and/or consideration of new services being provided, and use of reserves. As your manager, I will also be analyzing existing contracts for health benefits and property/casualty insurance to ensure that the Town and its employees are receiving the greatest benefit in relation to expenses incurred by each employee, and will review City contributions to the same to ensure that the greatest cost to benefit ratio is achieved. This usually occurs in June/July of each year.

In the coming year, the town will be preparing its first reserve policy that dictates a minimal funding percentage out of each fiscal year budget to be held in reserves each year. Over the summer, the Town will also be preparing our first Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that will list and prioritize capital and infrastructure related projects on an annualized basis for a 3 to 5 year period, with review of the same occurring in conjunction with each fiscal year budget cycle. Typical funding sources for CIP related projects will source from the County's local option sales tax (Penny for Pinellas) and the Town's beautification fund.

## **DEPARTMENTAL**

To date, I've met with all staff at least once, and several on more than one occasion. In conjunction with my initial assessment, I've asked each staff to provide me with a one-page summary of what they do that includes both job description and personal overview information. Receipt of this information, in conjunction with my initial assessment has been very beneficial in enabling me to understand existing work load, employee strengths and weaknesses, capabilities, and initiative and/or dedication of each employee. I have subsequently scheduled weekly one-on-one meetings with all Department head staff, and group staff meetings with all Department heads following a Council or Workshop meeting.

My encouragement of open communication with all staff has led to increased productivity, professionalism, and accountability on all levels. I've further stressed the value of all staff working together as a "team," as opposed to compartmentalization that occurred prior to my arrival. Organizational charts, a first for the City, have been prepared and presented to the Council that reflect Town structure before and after the arrival of the Town Manager. Maps and aerials reflecting Town attributes and boundaries have been updated or prepared anew and presented to the Council, with future copies planned for installation within Town Hall, the Community Center and on the Town website.

The Town will also be acquiring the services of an intern over the summer to assist in the development of a Town streets, sidewalks, and roadway signage database that will include an existing conditions summary of each, and recommendations for repair or replacement depending on condition or liability, as in the case of insufficient or outdated signage. This database will then be useful in supporting future discussions concerning development of the Town's first Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) that will list and prioritize capital projects for the Town over a 5 year period, with annual review of capital projects occurring in conjunction with preparation of the Town budget. The CIP document will be prepared during FY15/16.

In meeting with Councilwomen and residents, along with a cursory overview of the same, I've learned that certain parts of the Town's Uniform Development Code of Ordinances are in need of critique, update or clarification. Comments on the same have included requests for clarification of the Town's boat and/or recreational vehicle parking ordinance, the need for dock regulations on Town lakes, and the addition of length of stay provisions for POD (Portable on Demand) structures. It is important to note that Town representatives strongly recommend the continual allowance to park boats or recreational vehicles at their home, but that requests have been made to clarify the ordinance to ensure its enforceability as written, and to potentially consider limiting the number of these types of vehicles one a resident may have within their driveway or front yard. Feedback has also been received recommending that an additional emphasis be placed on enforcement of Town codes, and the particular wording within the Code of Ordinances in relation to the above referenced provisions. One suggestion has been to utilize Pinellas Park Code Enforcement staff to conduct a Town-wide sweep to identify potential violations, then provide the same to the Police Department for future handling.

A significant amount of feedback has been received regarding the need for education and clarification of responsibilities of the Town Police Department. Suggestions have included the development of a vision for the future of the department, and providing much needed education and transparency to the roles and expectations of the Police Department within the Town. Additional feedback has included requests for increased community policing, officer visibility, development of uniform and equipment allotment policies, and generally promoting accountability for Police Department actions, behavior, routines, and spending. In conjunction with the April Council workshop, the Town Manager has instituted the first of several educational and goal sessions where the Police Department has been tasked with providing the Council and community with a general understanding of their duties and responsibilities, and then soliciting Council feedback on the information provided, or additional level of service items requested.

Currently, after review and direction being received from Town Council, I have met with the Engineer responsible for the coordination of the Police Station renovations and advised them to modify their focus to include the entire Community Hall and Public Works facility in their approach, instead of just the Police Department. Suggestions have included providing recommendations on flexible, more open work spaces in the Police Department, connectivity to the Community Hall, and necessary updates to the Community Hall kitchen facilities. I've also asked for recommendations from the consultant to include options for updating the long outdated Public Works building, especially since the Town's insurance carrier regularly has advised the Town on risk for damage to this structure and/or liability of the same should the Town

experience a future storm event. Additional conversation has also included the feasibility of adding a second floor to the Community Hall to potentially support the addition of the relocation of Town Hall and associated Council offices.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE & PARKS**

Upon my extensive review of the Town, Iøve learned that Kenneth City has a number of hidden ògemsö that, with much deserved embellishment or recognition, would serve to improve the overall quality of life for the City and its residents, and provide much needed recognition for our Town in relation to neighboring communities. These notable attributes include several green space areas along 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue, east and west of 58<sup>th</sup> Street, the ball field behind the Public Works building, the right-of-way on either side of Joeø Creek, an intricate network of residential streets with minimal access to surrounding collector streets, and several lakes.

For a town roughly one-mile square and containing 5,000 residents, Iøve cataloged nearly 13 different lakes within the Town. These lakes average a couple acres in size, and are either completely surrounded by homes, or in some cases, the Town has ample access in the form of public right-of-way, easements, or direct water frontage. The overall value that lakes provide to the community is immense. Unanimous feedback from the Council and the community has included a focus lake recognition, including clean-up, signage overhaul, and access for community residents. The lakes in the community serve a dual purpose, both in the form of being part of the Townø master stormwater drainage plan, and for intrinsic, emotional, therapeutic and recreational value. Since joining the Town, Iøve met with Town staff, combed through Town maps and records, and even visited each lake in the presence of the public works supervisor and the Townø aquatic management consultant to better understand existing conditions and needs of each water feature. Town maps have been further modified to call specific attention to the Townø emerald necklace of lakes. My assessment of a number of these lakes has revealed a need exists for increased maintenance to control nuisance or exotic vegetation, the trimming of certain trees along shoreline areas to increase water views and eliminate hiding places for vagrants, and increase the potential for enjoyment or use of these features.

## **ADDITIONAL EMPHASIS AREAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Additional comments or suggestions received from Council members and residents, including some of my own recommendations include:

- Additional shoreline cleanup and beautification of lakes Lori, Paul, Anne Leah, and Thomas, including exotic species removal (cattail, primrose willow, Brazilian pepper, etc.), limb removal from shore line trees up to 6ø from the ground, ultimately creating increased lake views from surrounding properties.
- Regular and recurring Park maintenance to include regular tree pruning creating a clear walk path 6ø and under for all trees within Parks.

- With several lakes being the property of the City, several could include small, handicapped accessible T-Docks to provide residents additional quality of life benefit and water access.
- The Town could promote more community events, including food truck rallies, canoe/kayak demo days, lake shoreline clean-up events, and BBQs within Town parks.
- The compact nature of the Town lends itself to allowing the development of flexible walking and bicycling routes throughout the Town, complete with interpretive maps or pavement markings. Special routes could be identified with distances of 1-5 miles, with routes accessing Town features (lakes, Town Hall, Community Hall, playgrounds, Joe's Creek, and commercial points of interest ó err doughnut shops and/or other eateries.
- Introduction of the Town's first (and County's first) bicycle loaner program whereby single-speed, beach-cruiser type bikes with baskets could be used for quick trips about Town, for shopping, the post office, or to get coffee/doughnuts.
- Green space areas along 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue, east and west of 58<sup>th</sup> Street could be master planned to include additional seating areas, widened sidewalks, decorative lighting and/or increased power outlets to encourage art walks, festival usage, or garden parties. Existing placement of vegetation (non-tree) could be relocated or removed to afford additional space for children to play. Pavers could be used for improved delineation of park bench areas, and signage could be minimized or consolidated where possible.
- The Town Hall park on 54<sup>th</sup> could be master planned to include additional reinforced ó Geoweb parking for special events and/or increased park usage. I've already tasked Public Works to trim or remove errant vegetation within the Park and along the lakeshore to increase waterfront visibility from the park. A local landscape architect has also been contacted to make recommendations for Park improvements that will then be presented to the Council.
- Additional Town identification signage is needed along significant roadways providing Town access from the north, south, east and west. Negotiations are already underway with a potential sign location along 58<sup>th</sup> Street at the Town's southern border with St. Petersburg. Other sign locations include along 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue from the west to compliment recently installed signage at the Town's eastern entry along 46<sup>th</sup>, 58<sup>th</sup> Street north, 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue east and west, 66<sup>th</sup> Street, and potentially 62<sup>nd</sup> Street, north and south.
- Re-branding of the Town to remove its historical, stereotypical image of being strictly a "speed trap" town.
- Encouragement of businesses to improve their facades along 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 66<sup>th</sup> Street with potential Town assistance through use of a façade grant program (Ex: Moose Lodge on 54<sup>th</sup> and Kenneth City Meat Market/Post Office plaza on 58<sup>th</sup>).
- Provide naming recognition for certain Town parks, potentially re-naming an existing park, and dedicating a Town facility in honor of Sidney Colen, the Town's original founder.
- Researching the possibility of working with Pinellas County to see what options exist for potential improvements along 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue North. However, with that said, the general recommendations received to date have included a focus on some of the other "community-minded" projects mentioned herein as they are more directly related to quality of life benefit for Town residents, as opposed to simple visibility for motorists who are only passing through the Town in route to points east and west of the portion of the Town that borders on 54<sup>th</sup>. Additional signage along the eastern and western borders

of the Town along 54<sup>th</sup>, as well as general business façade assistance, and improvements being made to the park opposite Town Hall might help to accomplish the desired community visibility within this area of the Town.

- Improvements to the northern bank of Joeø Creek to potentially include a walking trail, signage, and/or mile markers, etc.
- Potential removal of the eastbound speed feedback sign located in the public right-of-way along 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue.
- Research the potential of squaring off the Townø borders to include Annexation of the residential subdivision surrounding Lake Lori, Dixie Hollins High School, and other isolated County enclaves.
- Future expansion of the 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Joeø Creek water quality improvement project to include the potential for multi-use trail development within the drainage right-of-way, ultimately providing future pedestrian access to Joeø Creek.
- Promotion of public art opportunities Town-wide, including possible murals on Public Buildings.
- Promotion of a contest with local schools whereby children are encouraged to come up with a catchy slogan that promotes the Town, for instance the øPearl of Pinellas,ö as in the case of what Tavares recently accomplished with their øSeaplane City,ö and Dunedin with øHome of Honeymoon Island.ö
- Place a greater emphasis on Code Enforcement practices within the Town, using Pinellas Park and other successful communities as examples.
- Follow-up on efforts to work with Pinellas Park to get the Building Department computerized (ex. Brian Haas & Vistalogic).
- Obtain a øsocial media critiqueö of the Townø website, including the addition of more interactive information, Town Photos, links to a Town historical documentary, area resources, and a documents library, etc. Potential development of a LinkedIn Page for the Town is an option.
- Update the Town website to include pictures of Town Council including a general resume for each.
- New directional signage on 54<sup>th</sup> at 58<sup>th</sup> Street to better orient motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians to the Community Hall, Fire & Police Department, and Town Green areas.
- Promotion of an annual Kenneth City volunteer brunch in the fall of each year.
- Drafting of a Town Civility Policy that defines what it means to be a responsible public servant, that promotes healthy debate at public meetings without personal attacks, and that fosters and encourages mutual respect among community leaders, citizens and staff.
- Modernization of the Town baseball field to include backstop removal, potential low rise decorative (42ö high) fencing along 46<sup>th</sup> Ave., picnic tables, and inclusion in the parks master plan in the form of a øTown Green.ö
- Potential all-weather covers for tennis and basketball courts enabling use during inclement weather.
- Additional special events within Town park areas to include food truck rallies, picnics, etc.
- Additional master planning of Town Hall park to include more parking, landscaping, signage and walkway connectivity to Town Hall.

- Potential Town Master Planning to include consolidation of Town services within buildings on 46<sup>th</sup>, and leasing of Town Hall building on 54<sup>th</sup>.
- Art walks on 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue öEast and West Greensö at various times of the year; Green Markets on the Town Green once a week during the season.
- Introduction of a öTouch a Truckö event on the Town Green.
- Acquisition of a portable stage for future special events and/or theatrical performances within the Town Green.
- Increased communication with area business and land owners to potentially encourage redevelopment and/or beautification of dilapidated structures (i.e. Twisty Treat, K-Mart, and old Sweet Bay building).
- The addition of name designations for green areas along 46<sup>th</sup> Avenue to potentially öEast Green & West Green.ö
- Increased regular maintenance of Town parks and green spaces.
- Increased management and monitoring of bathroom facilities within playground opposite the Community Hall. Consideration of possible lighting.
- Increased emphasis on walking and/or bicycle routes throughout Town.
- Consideration of speed tables or a traffic circle at the intersection of 46<sup>th</sup> & 58<sup>th</sup> in place of the traffic light.
- Review healthcare and property liability insurance contracts to ensure the Town is getting the best services for the amounts paid, and potentially look for reductions in overall costs to Town employees.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

In summary, the number of projects and task items outlined within this document represents roughly two months of in-depth observations made by a professional town manager of the Town, its people, staff and municipal relationships with the community. Based on the limited resources of time, staff and funding, the Town and its leadership is cautiously advised to remain realistic in its expectations, but optimistic that a number of these items can reasonably be accomplished within the next six (6) to 12 months, with more involved, or ongoing projects spanning a period of two (2) to 5 years. Respectfully so, a number of these projects are already underway based on positive feedback being received individually from Councilwomen over the past couple of months, including Lake Thomas shoreline clean-up and beautification; planning for future entryway signage; park, police and public works building master planning, policy and budget development, and so on.

A number of the projects represented within this document will involve capital outlay from Town Beautification and Infrastructure funds, and will ultimately serve to alter the landscape, visibility, and notoriety of the Town in a positive manner. Due to the extensive amount of information being presented within this document, my plan is to distribute this material to Town Council at the April 23, 2014 workshop, and then allow Councilwomen to review the document at their leisure over the next several weeks, and be prepared to discuss and provide additional direction at the May 7, 2014 Town Council meeting.